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EXAMINER

REAGAN, JAMES A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3621

DATE MAILED: 02/02/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/843,208

Applicant(s)

NARASIMHAN, EZHILAN

Examiner

James A. Reagan

Art Unit

3621

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 June 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. This action is in response to the amendment filed on 07 June 2004.
2. Claims 1-20 have been amended.
3. Claims 1-20 have been examined.
4. The rejections of claims 1-20 have been updated to reflect the amended limitations.

RESPONSE TO ARGUMENTS

5. Applicant's arguments received on 07 June 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Referring to the previous Office action, Examiner has cited relevant portions of the references as a means to illustrate the systems as taught by the prior art. As a means of providing further clarification as to what is taught by the references used in the first Office action, Examiner has expanded the teachings for comprehensibility while maintaining the same grounds of rejection of the claims, except as noted above in the section labeled "Status of Claims." This information is intended to assist in illuminating the teachings of the references while providing evidence that establishes further support for the rejections of the claims.
6. With regard to the limitations of claim 1, Applicant argues, "Because Belford et al. only teaches using high-speed connections, Belford et al. teaches away from using a low-speed connection, such as a wireless connection, to interconnect computers to its server. As a result, one of skill in the art would not combine Belford et al., which requires high-speed connections, with Stone et al., which utilizes a wireless laptop computer or a cell phone to purchase goods and services." However, dial-up connections are not considered high-speed connections. Because Belford

clearly discloses a low-speed Internet connection, the Applicant's arguments are clearly in contradiction to the disclosure of Belford and the assertion that Belford teaches away from the claimed invention has no validity.

Applicant also argues, "...none of the cited references, taken individually or together, teach transmitting travel expense data from a hand-held computer to a server via a wireless network." However, a handheld computer is equivalent to a laptop computer because they impart the same functionality to the user and solve the same problems. Also, travel expenses are functionally equivalent to any other type of expense data transmitted from one computing device to another.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 1, 3-11, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Belford et al. (US 2001/0034675 A1) in view of Stone et al. (US 6,446,045 B1).

Examiner's note: Examiner has pointed out particular references contained in the prior art of record in the body of this action for the convenience of the Applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply. Applicant, in preparing the response, should consider fully the *entire* reference as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the Examiner.

Claim 1:

Belford, as shown, discloses the following limitations:

- a) displaying a screen on the hand-held computer that includes a field for receiving travel expense report data (see at least Figures 4-7);*
- b) entering travel expense report data into the hand-held computer (see at least paragraph 0005);*
- c) displaying a screen on the hand-held computer that includes a field for receiving travel expense item data (see at least Figures 4-7);*
- d) entering travel expense item data into the hand-held computer (see at least paragraph 0005);*

Belford does not disclose:

- e) transmitting the travel expense report data from the hand-held computer to the server via a wireless network; and*
- f) transmitting the travel expense item data from the hand-held computer to the server via the wireless network.*

Stone, however, discloses the purchasing of goods and services using a wireless laptop computer or a cell phone (column 6, lines 52-53). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the expense tracking and reporting system of Belford with the pervasive and widespread use of wireless technology as shown by Stone because transmitting travel expense reports via a cell phone or other similar wireless network provides a mechanism for quickly, efficiently, and cost-effectively filing travel expense reports without relying on slower and/or less reliable methods.

Claims 3-7:

Belford, as shown, discloses the following limitations:

- *entering a date (see at least Figure 4, date fields).*

- *entering a plurality of dates* (see at least Figure 4, date fields).
- *entering a plurality of dates and a title of a travel expense event* (see at least Figure 4, date fields, company field, title; Figures 6 and 7).
- *entering the type of the travel expense item* (see at least Figure 4, code and category fields, comment fields).
- *selecting a travel expense item type from a plurality of travel expense item types* (see at least Figure 4, code and category fields, comment fields).

Belford does not specifically show that a title can be entered into the travel expense report. However Belford does show titles to the expense reports (budget worksheet), company fields for inserting company names and other subject fields where identifying data can be instantiated. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Belford to include a modifiable title field because this would identify the travel expense worksheet with a specific expense.

Claim 8:

With regard to the limitation of *entering a monetary amount*, Belford discloses fields for entering amounts (see at least Figure 4).

Claim 9:

With regard to the limitation of *transmitting the travel expense report via a network suited for a personal digital assistant*, Belford, in paragraph 0022, discloses a web based digital assistant but does not specifically disclose a PDA or PALM™ unit. However, Stone discloses wireless communication at column 6, lines 52-53. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine Belford's disclosure of the personal digital

assistant (PDA) with Stone's discussion of wireless applications because most personal digital assistants are, in fact, wireless devices.

Claim 10:

The combination of Belford/Stone discloses the wireless travel expense tracking and approval system as shown above. Belford/Stone do not specifically disclose *transmitting the travel expense report via a cellular phone network*. However, Stone discloses the purchasing of goods and services using a wireless laptop computer or a cell phone (column 6, lines 52-53). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the travel expense tracking and reporting system of Belford with the pervasive and widespread use of cell phone technology as shown by Stone because transmitting travel expense reports via a cell phone or other similar wireless network provides a mechanism for quickly, efficiently, and cost-effectively filing travel expense reports without relying on slower and/or less reliable methods.

Claim 11:

The combination of Belford/Stone discloses the wireless travel expense tracking and approval system as shown above. Belford/Stone do not specifically disclose:

g) entering a user ID into the hand-held computer; and

h) entering a password into the hand-held computer.

However, Stone, in column 23, line 67, discloses log in and password control. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the travel expense tracking and reporting system of Belford with the pervasive and widespread use of specific user ID's and user assigned passwords as shown by Stone because using a specific user ID and user assigned password decreases the occurrences of fraudulent behavior due to the

unsanctioned access of travel expense reports and travel expense accounting by unauthorized personnel.

Claim 15:

Belford, as shown, discloses the following limitations:

- a) displaying a screen on the hand-held computer that includes a field for receiving travel expense report data (see at least Figures 4-7);*
- b) entering travel expense report data into the hand-held computer (see at least paragraph 0005);*
- c) displaying a screen on the hand-held computer that includes a field for receiving travel expense item data (see at least Figures 4-7);*
- d) entering travel expense item data into the hand-held computer (see at least paragraph 0005);*
- g) displaying a second screen on the hand-held computer that includes a field for receiving second travel expense item data (see at least Figures 4-7);*
- h) entering second travel expense item data into the hand-held computer (see at least paragraph 0005);*

Belford does not disclose:

- e) transmitting the travel expense report data from the hand-held computer to the server via a wireless network; and*
- f) transmitting the travel expense item data from the hand-held computer to the server via the wireless network.*

Stone, however, discloses the purchasing of goods and services using a wireless laptop computer or a cell phone (column 6, lines 52-53). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the travel expense tracking and reporting system of Belford with the pervasive and widespread use of wireless technology as shown by

Stone because transmitting travel expense reports via a cell phone or other similar wireless network provides a mechanism for quickly, efficiently, and cost-effectively filing travel expense reports without relying on slower and/or less reliable methods.

The combination of Belford/Stone discloses the wireless travel expense tracking and approval system as shown above. Belford/Stone do not specifically disclose:

g) entering a user ID into the hand-held computer; and

h) entering a password into the hand-held computer.

However, Stone, in column 23, line 67, discloses log in and password control. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the travel expense tracking and reporting system of Belford with the pervasive and widespread use of specific user ID's and user assigned passwords as shown by Stone because using a specific user ID and user assigned password decreases the occurrences of fraudulent behavior due to the unsanctioned access of travel expense reports and travel expense accounting by unauthorized personnel.

9. Claims 2 and 12-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Belford/Stone and further in view of McKeen, Jr. (US 4,037,956).

Claim 2:

With regard to the limitations of *generating a temporary travel expense report ID and generating a travel expense item ID*, Belford discloses an invoice number and category codes i.e. expense item identification numbers (see at least Figures 4-7). Belford does not specifically disclose that the invoice number is a temporary number. McKeen, however, in column 2 lines 13-17 discloses temporary identification numbers and permanent identification numbers. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the invoice number tracking system of Belford with McKeen's long-standing and recognized use of

temporary and permanent identification numbers. Assigning a temporary identification number to expensive invoices that have not been completed or approved, and subsequently assigning a permanent invoice number once a travel expense report has been approved, provides a process and an indication that indicates that an invoice has been properly completed and approved without requiring further updates or changes.

Claim 12:

The combination of Belford/Stone/McKeen discloses temporary and permanent invoice tracking numbers as shown above. Belford/Stone/McKeen does not specifically disclose:

- g) storing the temporary travel expense report ID and the travel expense report data in a first file on the hand-held computer; and*
- h) storing the temporary travel expense report ID, the travel expense item ID and the travel expense item data in a second file on the hand-held computer.*

However, Belford does disclose a database server connected to a centralized database (paragraph 0023), and updating the tracking system (paragraph 0044 and 0050), essentially disclosing storage of data. Belford does not specifically disclose that the temporary travel expense report identification and travel expense item ID and data are stored at a second location on a computer. However, Stone, in column 15 lines 1 through 25 does disclose a mirror hard disk and frequent backups of data storage. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to store different aspects of the travel expense report in different locations on a computer because this protects the data from file corruption's that might delete a file or render a file inaccessible. Storing different files or variations of a single file in several locations on the hard disk reduces the chances of losing all of the data concerning a specific travel expense report.

Claim 13:

The combination of Belford/Stone/McKeen discloses temporary and permanent invoice tracking numbers as shown above. Belford/Stone/McKeen does not specifically disclose:

- g) receiving a final travel expense report ID from the server; and*
- h) replacing the temporary travel expense report ID in the hand-held computer with the final travel expense report ID.*

However, Belford, in paragraph 0039 discloses account Manager approval of the expense invoice and in paragraph 0044 discloses updating the tracking system as well as a wire transfer. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the travel expense report tracking system of Belford/Stone/McKeen to send out a currently filed final travel expense report and identification number. Concurrently, it is also routine that tentative expense reports are only reimbursed after approval by senior accounting staff and that the disbursement of monetary funds should be kept as a record after the final and approved expense report has been filed with few proper updates, corrections, and a final identification numbers as a historical record of disbursements.

Claim 14:

The combination of Belford/Stone/McKeen discloses temporary and permanent invoice tracking numbers as shown above. Belford/Stone/McKeen does not specifically disclose:

- i) storing the final travel expense report ID in a first file on the hand-held computer;*
- j) storing the final travel expense report ID and the travel expense item ID in a second file on the hand-held computer.*

However, Belford does disclose a database server connected to a centralized database (paragraph 0023), and updating the tracking system (paragraph 0044 and 0050), essentially disclosing storage of data. Belford does not specifically disclose that the final expense report

identification and expense item ID are stored at a second location on a computer. However, Stone, in column 15 lines 1 through 25 does disclose a mirror hard disk and frequent backups of data storage. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to store different aspects of the expense report in different locations on a computer because this protects the data from file corruption's that might delete a file or render a file inaccessible. Storing different files or variations of a single file in several locations on the hard disk reduces the chances of losing all of the data concerning a specific expense report.

10. Claims 16 and 18-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Belford/Stone and further in view of Bouet (US 2002/0093923 A1).

Claim 16:

Belford, as shown, discloses the following limitations:

- b) displaying a second screen on the hand-held computer, the second screen containing a field for receiving travel expense report data (see at least Figures 4-7);*
- c) displaying a third screen on the hand-held computer, the third screen containing a field for receiving travel expense item data (see at least Figures 4-7);*

The combination of Belford/Stone discloses the wireless travel expense tracking and approval system as shown above. Belford/Stone do not specifically disclose *a) displaying a first screen on the hand-held computer, the first screen containing a field for receiving a user ID and a field for receiving a password*. However, Stone, in column 23, line 67, discloses log in and password control. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the travel expense tracking and reporting system of Belford with the pervasive and widespread use of specific user ID's and user assigned passwords as shown by

Stone because using a specific user ID and user assigned password decreases the occurrences of fraudulent behavior due to the unsanctioned access of expense reports and expense accounting by unauthorized personnel. In addition, although Stone does not specifically disclose a first screen that displays log in and password entry fields, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use a double field entry screen to supply user ID's and passwords because this technique is a popular a user-friendly way of ensuring that only authorized personnel are granted access to sensitive documents.

The combination of Belford/Stone discloses the wireless travel expense tracking and approval system as shown above. Belford/Stone do not specifically disclose *d) displaying a fourth screen on the hand-held computer, the fourth screen indicating the status of a wireless data transfer from the hand-held computer to a server*. Bouet, however, in at least Figure 5 and associated text, discloses a download status indicator in a wireless device. Although Bouet discloses a download indicator, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the wireless travel expense tracking and reporting system of Belford/Stone with the pervasive and widespread use of data transfer status indicators because such meters provide an indication of the time required to fully transfer a file.

Claim 18:

The combination of Belford/Stone/Bouet discloses temporary and permanent invoice tracking numbers as shown above. Belford/Stone/Bouet does not specifically disclose *e) displaying a fifth screen on the hand-held computer, the fifth screen containing a final travel expense report ID*. However, Belford, in paragraph 0039 discloses account manager approval of the expense invoice and in paragraph 0044 discloses updating the tracking system as well as a wire transfer. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the wireless travel expense report tracking system of Belford/Stone/Bouet to display currently filed final travel expense report and identification numbers because this would

provide an indication that the expense report was properly filed, accepted, and approved by a signatory authority.

Claim 19:

The combination of Belford/Stone/Bouet discloses temporary and permanent invoice tracking numbers as shown above. Belford/Stone/Bouet does not specifically disclose e) *displaying a fifth screen on the hand-held computer, the fifth screen containing a temporary travel expense report ID and a final travel expense report ID*. However, Belford, in paragraph 0039 discloses account Manager approval of the expense invoice and in paragraph 0044 discloses updating the tracking system as well as a wire transfer. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the wireless expense report tracking system of Belford/Stone/Bouet to simultaneously display currently filed final travel expense report and identification numbers as well as the associated temporary travel expense report and identification numbers because this would provide an indication that the expense report was properly filed, accepted, and approved by a signatory authority, as well as providing a document history associated with updated expense reports.

Claim 20:

The combination of Belford/Stone/Bouet discloses temporary and permanent invoice tracking numbers as shown above. Belford/Stone/Bouet do not specifically disclose e) *displaying a fifth screen on the hand-held computer, the fifth screen containing a final travel expense item ID that was transmitted from a server to the hand-held computer*. However, Belford, in paragraph 0039 discloses account manager approval of the expense invoice and in paragraph 0044 discloses updating the tracking system as well as a wire transfer. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the wireless travel expense report tracking system of Belford/Stone/Bouet to display currently filed final item identification

numbers because this would provide an indication that the expense report was properly filed, accepted, and approved by a signatory authority, and transmitting the final report to person involved with the reimbursement process.

11. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Belford/Stone/Bouet, and further in view of McKeen.

Claim 17:

With regard to the limitations of e) *displaying a fifth screen on the hand-held computer, the fifth screen containing a temporary travel expense report ID*, Belford discloses an invoice number and category codes i.e. expense item identification numbers (see at least Figures 4-7). Belford does not specifically disclose that the invoice number is a temporary number. McKeen, however, in column 2 lines 13-17 discloses temporary identification numbers and permanent identification numbers. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the invoice number tracking system of Belford with McKeen's long-standing and recognized use of temporary and permanent identification numbers. Assigning a temporary identification number to inexpensive invoice that has not been completed or approved, and subsequently assigning a permanent invoice number once an expense report has been approved provides a means and an indication which indicates that an invoice has been properly completed and approved without requiring further updates or changes.

Conclusion

12. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).
13. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to **James A. Reagan** whose telephone number is **(703) 306-9131**. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 9:30am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, **James Trammell** can be reached at (703) 305-9768.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the **Receptionist** whose telephone number is **(703) 305-3900**. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://portal.uspto.gov/external/portal/pair> . Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

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Washington, D.C. 20231

or faxed to:

(703) 305-7687 [Official communications; including

After Final communications labeled "Box AF"]

(703) 308-1396 [Informal/Draft communications, labeled "PROPOSED"

or "DRAFT"]

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5, 2451 Crystal Drive, Arlington, VA, 7th floor receptionist.

JAR

24 January 2004


JAMES P. TRAMMELL
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
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